

REGION 9 BOARD OF EDUCATION  
December 16, 2014  
REGULAR MEETING  
Minutes

Attendance: Region 9 Board of Education members: D'Agostino, Gombos, Hancock, Hocker, King, Lewis

Administration: Josefsberg, McMorran, Pierson Ugol, Czudak, Geraghty, Pin, Santangeli, Panos

Others: four members of the community and staff, a representative of the Redding Pilot/Easton Courier and videographer

Mr. Hocker called the meeting of the Region 9 Board of Education to order at 7:03 pm in the Joel Barlow Media Center.

STUDENT COMMENT

Ellery Capshaw reported that students are busy with end of semester studies and activities. She reported on the successes of the Debate Team. The choir Winter Concert is Thursday and a Community Carol sing is planned for Monday, December 22, 2014. Work on the winter play production has begun, and the Connecticut Drama Association competition will be hosted at Barlow in March.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the minutes of the November 25, 2014 meeting as submitted. Gombos, Hancock. Approved. Unanimous.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dana Gray, Redding: Mrs. Gray asked when the results of the Superintendent Survey would be available. Dr. Josefsberg noted that the results would be posted on the website soon. Mrs. Gray also commented that the school emails are not being sent from an ER9 address as they previously were. They are coming through under Vicki Cram's name which is not recognized by some and are frequently sent to spam. Mrs. Sullivan noted that this was the result of changing vendors and that another problem with text messages has now been corrected. She will have the email issue addressed. Mrs. Gray also asked Dr. McMorran to share the information that was gathered regarding the data inquiry project and the developmental needs of students in math.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON TWO-TIER BUSING

Dr. Josefsberg stated that the decline in enrollment has allowed for consideration of the change from a three-tier bus program to a two-tier program and change the start & end times for the schools. The proposal will allow the high school to start 15 minutes later, at 7:45 am. The bus runs for the elementary and middle schools would be combined and the start & end times would be adjusted. The change would allow high schoolers to have 15 minutes more of sleep time. The savings for taxpayers is estimated to be \$46,000 for Redding and \$39,500 for Easton. The savings is from fuel costs and driver time. One of the benefits of the change is the ability to plan professional development activities for the combined K-8 staff. Dr. Josefsberg acknowledged that the mixing of elementary age and middle school age children may be a concern for parents.

Discussion of the concept followed. Mrs. Sullivan noted that there is ample room on the buses to accommodate the combined bus routes. Mrs. Gombos noted that Easton had combined bus runs about 10 years ago and it worked. Mr. D'Agostino questioned how the drop off at the two schools would work with the same start time, and questioned how parents could drop off children at both schools at the same time. Mrs. Sullivan responded that there is a 10 to 15 minute time difference that has not yet been resolved. She added that the contract and cost for transportation for Region 9 would remain the same.

Mr. Lewis noted that the impact on Region 9 is minor, and the Region 9 Board of Education should wait for the Easton & Redding Boards to take action.

#### DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON BEYOND BARLOW'S BORDERS: EARLY COLLEGE & ONLINE COURSE EXPERIENCES

Teacher Christopher Angell presented information about Early College Programs, High School Partnerships with local community colleges, and a Taste of College Program. Discussion of the programs followed.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve moving forward with the Beyond Barlow's Borders Programs as described. Hancock, Gombos. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON PROPOSAL FOR TRACK SHED PROJECT

The administration's proposal for the Track Shed Project was reviewed and approved at the Facilities and Fields Committee. The Project, to be funded from donations from the Russell Neary family and other community members, is to be dedicated to Mr. Neary. The facility will be used to store cross country, indoor track, and track & field equipment.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the Russell Neary Track Shed Project and direct the administration to commence with the necessary permits and begin construction. D'Agostino, King. Approved. Unanimous.**

It was noted that the administration would be bringing forward additional donations that have been received for the shed project at next month's meeting.

#### DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON REVIEW OF JUNE 30, 2014 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND AUDIT REPORT

Mrs. Sullivan provided a review of the Audit Report. She noted one change regarding the Pension Fund that results in a change in the funding level.

Mr. King noted that he and Mr. Johnston met with Scott Bassett, a partner with McGladrey, LLP, for a thorough review of the financial documents and the audit report. He noted that the auditor recommended that transfers of under \$10,000 be reviewed at the board's monthly meetings, and that transfers of over \$10,000 be approved at board meetings. The auditor also suggested a policy of transparency for the expense accounts, with the reports to be submitted quarterly for review by the Audit Committee. Mr. King noted that the Miscellaneous Revenue is over \$800,000 and consists primarily of booster club activity funds. The auditor recommended that the Superintendent's office prepare a report on this account for submission and review by the Audit Committee on a quarterly basis. The Audit Committee will also develop a purchase/procurement policy.

Mrs. Gombos commented that it has been customary for representatives of the auditing firm to present the audit to the Board of Education, and she specifically requested that at the last board meeting. Since the Board also functions as a board of finance, she feels it is critical for board members to be aware of the district's finances. Mr. Hocker responded that he made the decision not to have the auditor present since the Audit Committee had reviewed the report thoroughly, but recognized that he missed the request for the auditors' presentation which was in the minutes of the November meeting. Mrs. Gombos asked that this be corrected next year.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education accept the June 30, 2014 Financial Statements and Audit Report as reviewed. Hancock, Lewis. Approved. 5-0-1. Mrs. Gombos abstained.**

## ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Assistant Superintendent, Head of School: Dr. McMorran provided a written report. On November 25, the CT State Department of Education recognized teacher Juli Givoni as one of four finalist for the Connecticut Teacher of the Year. Paula Panos provided an update on the college admission process. She reported that of the 264 seniors, 46 applied for early decision. As of now, 15 students have been admitted, with seven denied and six deferred. Over 1980 applications have been processed, with more anticipated. 75% of the seniors have completed applications as of now.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction: Mrs. Pierson Ugol submitted a written report for review. She reported she completed a 3-day consultancy session in Westchester County studying central office goals, responsibilities, efficiencies, functionality, and how that central office relates to the schools in the district. She is looking forward to bringing back some ideas for implementation.

Director of Finance and Operation: Mrs. Sullivan reported health insurance claims and the reserve account are in good shape. She noted there are unanticipated costs in the special education accounts due to new students to the district with outplacements needed.

The issue of the sealing of the brickwork on the school building was addressed. Mrs. Sullivan reported that funds could not be found within the operating budget to fund the \$20,000 project. She suggested a transfer of that amount from the health insurance contribution. Discussion following.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the transfer of \$20,000 from the Capital Reserve Fund to cover the \$20,000 cost to seal the brickwork. Lewis.**  
**Motion failed due to a lack of a second.**

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the transfer of \$20,000 from the Health Insurance contribution to cover the \$20,000 cost to seal the brickwork. King, Hocker.**  
**Motion failed with a 2-4 vote. Voting for the motion: Hocker & King. Voting against the motion: Lewis, Gombos, D'Agostino, Hancock**

Mrs. Sullivan reported the fuel prices have been locked in for next year, with heating oil at \$2.48 and diesel at \$2.56. There is no news on the Bethel taxation of the transportation fleet at this time. The Redding Building Inspector has signed off on the Stadium Project, and Mr. Czudak is waiting for the paperwork for the Certificate of Occupancy to be completed.

Mrs. Sullivan reported that she has not identified a resource to assist her in closing out the building project.

Superintendent: Dr. Josefsberg read a portion of a letter he wrote to Easton bus driver David Spellman. Mr. Spellman was commended for his action in response to a student's concern when he observed a danger at his home after getting off the bus. Mr. Spellman took action to protect the student and contacted the police. The police were able to arrest a burglary suspect.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

Superintendent Search: Mr. Hocker reported the Committee is on track, with the position to be advertised shortly, and the selection process finalized in early March. Dr. Josefsberg reported that 650 surveys were received, with 357 of them from parents. The results of the survey will be posted on the website.

PUBLIC COMMENT: none

#### BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. D'Agostino commented the need for the Region 9 board to be included in the long range planning efforts that are occurring in both Easton and Redding. Dr. Josefsberg indicated that both the Redding and Easton boards are exploring all options at this point and he would provide monthly reports to the Region 9 Board. Mrs. Gombos was in agreement that the Region 9 Board should be involved in those discussions.

Mr. Hocker noted that he serves on the Redding MBR Committee. This group is working toward a resolution of the MBR requirement through CAFE. Mr. D'Agostino suggested the Region 9 board should be involved in those meetings and discussions.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Motion: move that the meeting be adjourned. D'Agostino, Hancock. Approved. Unanimous.**

The meetings were adjourned at 8:59 pm

Submitted by Catherine Gombos, Board Secretary  
Recorded by Mary Maday